

Collection #  
SC 2983  
OMB 0140

## WILLIAM THEODORE RAY PAPERS, 1945–1996

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 5 manuscript folders, 1 oversized box, 1 photograph folder

COLLECTION DATES: 1945–1996

PROVENANCE:

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2003.0301

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

William Theodore Ray (1916–2010) was an African-American businessman and politician in the Indianapolis area. Ray was born in New Haven, Connecticut. He attended the public schools of Caldwell, New Jersey, and Oberlin College from 1934 to 1936. For the 1938–1939 school year, he attended Cleveland College part-time and worked on a degree in business administration.

In September 1941, Ray was drafted and served in the South Pacific Theater during World War II. He earned a bronze star and attained the rank of Major in the U.S. Army.

After the war, Ray went to Indiana University – Indianapolis from 1946 to 1947 for a degree in real estate, and then became a self-employed realtor, and dealt mainly with residential and investment property sales. He was an advocate of residential desegregation, and in 1965, he became the first black member of the Indianapolis Real Estate Board. During this time he also served as the interim president of the regional office of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People for the Greater Indianapolis Area.

In 1973, Governor Otis R. Bowen selected Ray to be his Executive Assistant. He was primarily responsible for state and local government affairs. During his time as assistant, he helped create the State Department of Community Services, a program for Urban Mass Transit, and the state Housing Authority.

After working in the Bowen administration, Ray was appointed as director of the Indiana Department of Finance Institutions by Governor Robert D. Orr. As director, Ray regulated state chartered banks, savings and loans, credit unions, and commercial lenders. He also served as Chairman of the Midwest National Bank from 1983 to 1987, and as a trustee of the Sarah Walker (Madam C. J. Walker) Estate. Furthermore, he served on the Board of Directors for the Richard G. Lugar Fund for Hoosier Excellence and was chairman between the years 1983–1989, and served as Chairman for the Board of Directors for the Business Opportunity Systems (BOS) Community Development Corporation.

He was a member of Witherspoon Presbyterian Church and the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity.

Sources:

Material in the collection

Perry, Brandon A. "William T. Ray Remembered." *Indianapolis Recorder*, Dec. 30, 2010.

## **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

This collection contains correspondence, awards, certificates, appointments, and photographs pertaining to William Theodore Ray. There are a number of awards and appointments dating back to 1945 that document Ray's life including a bronze star he earned during World War II, an appointment as Executive Assistant to Governor Otis Bowen, and an appointment to the National Advisory Council on Economic Opportunity by President Ford. The collection also includes correspondence between Ray and various business and political leaders from 1964 to 1988, evidence of his work on a range of boards and committees dating from 1972 to 1989. Ray was the subject of numerous articles; many newspaper clippings (1949 to 1984) within the collection attest to this.

Also included are two photographs of Ray and others. The first is with Congressmen Bud Hillis and John Myers, and the second includes Ray, Peter Barrack, President of the Midwest National Bank, and Frank P. Lloyd, MD, Chairman of Midwest Bank Corporation.

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Memberships, Board, and Committee Documents  
1972-1989, n.d.

Certificates and Awards, 1945-1996

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1984, n.d.

William T. Ray, et al.

Promotion to Major, United States Army, 1952

Appointment as Executive Assistant to Indiana  
Governor Otis R. Bowen, 1973

Appointment as member of the Indiana Housing Study  
Commission by Gov. Bowen, 1973

Appointment to the Illinois-Indiana Bi-State  
Commission, 1974

Appointment to the Public Transportation Advisory  
Committee, 1975

Appointment to the National Advisory Council on  
Economic Opportunity by President Ford, 1976

Appointment as Executive Assistant to Gov. Bowen  
(Second Term 1977)

Recognition for Devotion as Trustee for Indianapolis  
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Appointment as Director of the Department of Financial Institutions by Indiana Governor Robert Orr, 1981	OMB 0140, Folder 10
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Appointment to Small Business Administration, 1984	OMB 0140, Folder 13

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 2983).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.